



The President's Daily Brief

14 December 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS



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The Soviet party Central Committee seems to be preparing to convene on Saturday. (Page 2)

Japan appears to want to assume a larger role in postwar Indochina. (Page 3)

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GREECE

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USSR

the Central Committee will meet on 16 December.

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A major item of business will be the approval of next year's economic plan and budget before they are formally adopted at the Supreme Soviet session that opens on the 18th. Despite the poor harvest, we do not expect major revisions in the 1973 plan or the five-year plan for 1971-75. Some tinkering is likely, however, such as a speedup in land reclamation programs and a more rigorous screening of new investment projects.

As is customary, party chief Brezhnev presumably will speak. We expect the Central Committee formally to relieve V. P. Mzhavanadze, retired Georgian party chief, of his candidate membership on the Politburo. A joint meeting of the Central Committee and the USSR and Russian Supreme Soviets will be held on the 21st to mark the Soviet Union's 50th anniversary.

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JAPAN-VIETNAM

Despite several false starts, the Japanese Government is now looking for ways to play a more active role in postwar arrangements for Vietnam. In a recent press conference Prime Minister Tanaka maintained that settlement of the problems in the region could not be feasible without Japan's participation. Although Tanaka did not appear to have a detailed proposal in mind, he has suggested an Asian parley following a cease-fire to discuss political and economic reconstruction problems. The Japanese Government has also discussed publicly the possibility of sponsoring an Indochina reconstruction fund to grant direct assistance and long-term, low interest loans to North and South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

A consensus is developing in Japan in favor of a greater leadership role in Southeast Asia. Tokyo clearly feels under domestic pressure to play some role in postwar Vietnam political arrangements in order to establish influence in Indochina. In addition, the Japanese recognize that there is considerable potential for economic gain in a postwar reconstruction program.

South Vietnam has generally welcomed Japanese aid and presumably would be receptive to postwar Japanese involvement. Tokyo also has reason to believe that Hanoi wants Japanese aid in economic rehabilitation.

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NOTES

USSR - North Vietnam:

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South Korea: President Pak will be re-elected next week by a collegial body called the National Council for Reunification. This new organization, composed of 2,359 deputies, will be popularly elected on Friday. Candidates have been handpicked by the government. The council will also serve as an unofficial upper house of parliament, and will in fact approve of Pak's list of deputies--one third of the new legislature--to be elected in February. Pak will be sworn in on 27 December, after which election of the other two thirds of the parliamentary deputies will be allowed to proceed.

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